

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-10

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO OAU COLLECTIVE

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON ROME

AMEMBASSY BONN

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 160652

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:SOPN, CG

SUBJECT: REFORM ISSUE IN ZAIRE

1.DEPARTMENT IS CONCERNED THAT IN SOME AFRICAN QUARTERS
REFORM IN ZAIRE IS BEING PORTRAYED AS A WESTERN IMPOSITION.
VIEWED FROM KINSHASA PUBLIC LINKAGE TO THIS EFFECT IS COUN-
TERPRODUCTIVE AND RUNS THE RISK OF UNDERMINING WHAT WE ARE
ATTEMPTING TO ACCOMPLISH.

2. THE CURRENT PROBLEMS IN ZAIRE HAVE BEEN BUILDING FOR
FOUR YEARS. THERE IS A GENERAL CONSENSUS WHICH INCLUDES
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ZAIRIANS AS TO THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEMS AND WHAT MUST BE
DONE TO CORRECT THEM. PRESIDENT MOBUTU HAS PUBLICLY ASSO-
CIATED HIMSELF WITH REFORM EFFORTS. SHABA II AND THE RE-
SULTING PARIS AND BRUSSELS CONFERENCES OF DONOR STATES
PROVIDED A FOCUS FOR THE REFORM CONSENSUS, AND AGREEMENT
BY THE PARTICIPANTS THAT PROGRESS MUST BE ACHIEVED IF EX-
TERNAL ASSISTANCE IS TO BE EFFECTIVE. WE AND OUR WESTERN

ALLIES HAVE PRESENTED THE REFORM ISSUE TO MOBUTU IN THIS
CONTEXT. WE ARE, IN FACT, EXERTING PRESSURE TO URGE
IMPLEMENTATION

OF REFORMS. HOWEVER, TO THE DEGREE THAT REFORMS ARE
PUBLICLY PORTRAYED IN THE PRESS AND ELSEWHERE AS WESTERN
IMPOSITIONS, THIS SETS UP A DYNAMIC THAT MIGHT SCUTTLE
OR RETARD THE PROCESS. WE ARE ANXIOUS TO AVOID THIS OUT-
COME.

3. WE ARE THEREFORE HEWING TO A PUBLIC LINE WHICH EMPHA-
SIZES THE GENERAL CONSENSUS THAT REFORMS ARE NECESSARY;
THAT THE ZAIRIAN GOVERNMENT SHARES THIS OPTIC; AND HAS
BEEN WORKING TOWARD THESE GOALS. WHAT WE REQUIRE IS
DEMONSTRABLE PROGRESS ON ZAIRE'S PART TO SOLVE THE PROB-
LEMS IT ITSELF HAS ACKNOWLEDGED.

4. FOR OAU CAPITALS: TO THE EXTENT THAT HOST GOVERNMENTS
SHARE OUR CONCERN AND WISH TO BE HELPFUL, SYMPATHETIC
MESSAGES OF SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO MOBUTU URGING
HIM TO PROCEED WITH THE INTERNAL REFORMS WHICH HE HAS
IDENTIFIED MIGHT BE USEFUL. HOWEVER, WE ARE NOT ANXIOUS
TO BEGIN AN ORCHESTRATED CAMPAIGN AND YOU SHOULD NOT SUG-
GEST A MESSAGE UNLESS YOUR ADVICE IS SOUGHT. CLEARLY
SOME AFRICAN LEADERS, SUCH AS SENGHOR AND HOUPHOUET, HAVE
GREATER CREDIBILITY WITH MOBUTU THAN OTHERS. YOU SHOULD
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TAKE THIS INTO ACCOUNT SHOULD THE SUBJECT OF ZAIRIAN
INTERNAL REFORM AND THE POSSIBILITY OF A MESSAGE ARISE.

5. EVEN IF ASKED, A MESSAGE SHOULD NOT BE SUGGESTED TO
LEADERS SUCH AS NYERERE WHO ARE STRONGLY AND ADAMANTLY
OPPOSED TO MOBUTU. VANCE

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